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## Ecumenism and Preaching the Word of God

We live at a time when ecumenism is not an option, but a need and a necessity. Especially for agnostics, atheists or believers of non-Christian religions, the division among Christians is a big obstacle to the possible, considered conversion and acceptance of Christianity. For instance, Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948) – aside from not being ready to admit that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ might have not only an exemplary character, but a redemptive consequence for all people – hesitated to become a Christian because of the fierce divisions among the followers of Christ in his time.

I am grateful to God that we live in an era when it is not a sin to enter a Protestant church, nor a synagogue or mosque; it is not prohibited for Catholics to participate in the prayer meetings of Protestants. Even more, we are now encouraged to do so, that is, to pray together with other Christians, to study the Bible together, and to prepare common translations of the Bible as part of the ecumenical enterprise (Benedict XVI, *Verbum Domini*, 46).

We cannot enjoy yet the moment of full communion among Christians, which would allow us to sit at one table and drink from one cup. We can, however, undertake a lot together. Even when we, as Christians, do something separately, it is important that we at least try not to do anything against each other, but rather search for the common good.

The aim of this paper is to show the promising fields in homiletics and in pastoral praxis of preaching where interdenominational cooperation is possible.

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This will include the presentation of real possibilities of collaboration among preachers belonging to different ecclesial communities, but also the warning not to cross the limits of one's own identity and faith convictions. True and lasting pastoral ecumenism cannot be based on resignation or declining of one's own confessional identity.

The presentation will have the following structure: first we will look at the common heritage of the Good News of Jesus Christ and of the witnesses-martyrs. Then we will ponder the Bible as a Source of Preaching, and afterwards the lectionary as gift and challenge. It will be followed by looking at the challenge of contemporary liturgical rules and the centrality of the preaching of Jesus Christ. The last thought will deal with the problem of divided Christian communities and the language of preaching. Everything will lead to a conclusion.

## **I. The common heritage of the Good News of Jesus Christ and of the witnesses-martyrs**

What we discover as our intrinsic call and magnificent duty is preaching Christ. Christians do not search for any privileges in any country or political system, but only demand the right to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ to all the people. It was His personal mandate given to His followers: go to the whole world and make disciples. Go and preach the Gospel, who believes will have eternal life, who does not believe will be condemned (see: Mark 16:15–16).

Members of different Christian denominations are convinced that the call to preach Jesus Christ is based on the grace of baptism. This sacrament provides those who receive it with the grace of eternal life and dignity of a divine childhood. At the same time, this sacrament imposes on its receivers the honorable obligation of proclaiming the person and the message of Jesus Christ.

So by the power of the received baptism, men and women are encouraged to proclaim Christ. The most basic and important as well as common form of that proclamation is bearing witness through a daily life lived in accordance with God's will revealed in Jesus Christ. There are no differences among the Churches about this common form of preaching. The Greek word used to name a witness is "martyr". The same word names someone killed because of the professed faith. This Greek name, "martyr", was adopted in theology as the technical term precisely because of its ambiguity. It embraces both: witness and martyr.

What is common, unfortunately, for Christian denominations are the martyrs, the slaughtered witnesses of the Gospel. Mentioning this common heritage, we may speak about the ecumenism of blood or ecumenism of martyrs. Those who hate witnesses of Christ do not ask for their denomination. They just kill

out of hatred. And the blood of martyrs is the seed of Christians (Lat. *Sanguis martyrurum est semen christianorum*). John Paul II observed: “Perhaps the most convincing form of ecumenism is the ecumenism of the saints and of the martyrs. The *communio sanctorum* speaks louder than the things which divide us”.<sup>1</sup> Aside from this honorable common heritage, we share as well the reverence and appreciation for the Bible as a source of Christian preaching.

## II. The Bible as a source of preaching

What is being preached by all Christians equally is the person of Jesus Christ and His teaching. And the main source for the preaching is the Bible, consisting of the Old Testament and the New Testament. It is a fact that we still differ with Protestants in the understanding of the authoritative subject of interpretation of the Bible in the Church and the decisive role of the Magisterium. Nevertheless we may undertake together the study of the Bible and prepare together common translations of the Bible as the main source for preaching.<sup>2</sup> The importance of the ecumenical translations of the Bible in various languages was emphasized by Pope John Paul II, who in this regard observed that “anyone who recalls how heavily debates about the Scripture influenced divisions, especially in the West, can appreciate the significant step forward which these common translations represent”.<sup>3</sup> This value of the common ecumenical translations of the Bible was stressed also by Pope Benedict XVI, who in his turn, promoted common translations of the Bible as part of the ecumenical enterprise. He also thanked all those engaged in this work, and encouraged them to persevere in their efforts. Likewise he observed that “translating a text is no mere mechanical task, but belongs in some sense to the work of interpretation”.<sup>4</sup> A good, faithful and comprehensible translation of the Bible is of great importance for preaching.

Preaching belongs to the tradition of interpretation and explanation of the Word of God. It is a vivid explanation of the Word of God; it is breaking open the Word of God. The Bible is the intrinsic and foundational source for preaching. The Bible does not exist for itself. It was written down for the people. It contains the Word of God and is itself the word of God.<sup>5</sup>

To be precise, we do not preach the Bible, but on account of the Bible we preach Jesus Christ, or in another words, we preach God’s awesome deeds in

<sup>1</sup> John Paul II: *Tertio Millennio adveniente* (10.11.1994) 37.

<sup>2</sup> See: Benedict XVI: *Verbum Domini* (30.09.2010) 46.

<sup>3</sup> John Paul II: *Ut unum sint* (25.05.1995) 44.

<sup>4</sup> *Verbum Domini* 46.

<sup>5</sup> See: Second Vatican Council: *Dei Verbum* (18.11.1965) 24.

the history of salvation. We teach about the Bible, but we preach the mystery of Christ who is alive and active in the midst of His Church in the changing universal and local history.

### III. Lectionary – gift and challenge

There are two main contexts in which the preaching of the Word of God takes place. The first and the most important is the liturgical one. The second and subordinate to the first one is the non-liturgical context of popular devotion. Especially the first, liturgical context delivers the hermeneutical method of the interpretation of the Word of God. The liturgy is governed by strict overall rules and clear norms concerning the passages from the Bible to be read on each day of the liturgical year. Popular devotion is not governed by strict rules and passages from the Scripture. Texts might be chosen by the presider of the pious practices.

Liturgy is then, aside from the translation of the Bible, one of the decisive hermeneutical keys which always has to be taken into consideration in liturgical preaching, which is the homily. Fragments of the Bible for the use of the liturgy have been prepared by the Holy See. After the Council of Trent (1545–1563), the Missal – i.e. the Mass Book – published by Pope Pius V in 1570 offered 138 passages from the Bible to be read in a one-year cycle. On Sundays there were two readings. The first one was taken – with three exemptions – from the letters of the Apostles and was called the Epistle. The second one was taken from the Gospel and was called so. It means that the Old Testament was read very seldom, actually only on three days during the liturgical year: the Solemnity of Epiphany, Good Friday and the Paschal Vigil.

The Second Vatican Council (1963–1965) put a great emphasis on providing the faithful with an abundant amount of Scripture readings. To implement the decisions made by the Council a special Board (Lat. *Consilium*) was assigned, which on March 11, 1964 organized working groups (Lat. *coeti*).<sup>6</sup> One of those groups, *Coetus XI*, prepared the new Lectionary. That group consisted of eighteen theologians from six countries. At the head of the group stood a Benedictine, Fr. Cipriano Vagaggini (1909–1999) from San Anselmo University. Another Italian was P. Massi. There were seven theologians from France: A.-M. Roguet, P. Jounel, J. Feder, H. Oster, J. Gaillard, L. Deiss, C. Wiéner; four from Belgium: A. Rose, E. Lanne, A. Nocent, H. Marot; three from Germany: H. Kahlefeld, K. Tillmann, H. Schürmann, one from the United States

<sup>6</sup> N. Bonneau: *The Sunday Lectionary. Ritual Word, Paschal Shape*. Collegeville MN 1998 p. 23–24.

of America – G. Diekmann, and one from Canada: G. Fontaine, who worked as a secretary of the group. These people cared for the Scripture readings in the liturgy. They did a great job. They analyzed all the Latin lectionaries used in the Occidental Church since the 6<sup>th</sup> century. The theologians also analyzed fifteen lectionaries of the Eastern Rite and all the Protestant lectionaries known at that time. They took into consideration the suggestions given by Bible theologians, liturgists, and those responsible for catechetical programs. Pope Paul VI accepted the Lectionary on April 3, 1969, promulgated it officially few weeks later, on May 29<sup>th</sup>, and ordered it to be introduced into pastoral practice in the whole Church on November 28, 1971, the first Sunday of Advent.<sup>7</sup>

That lectionary has been used for almost fifty years now. It provided Catholic bishops, priests, and deacons with the source of liturgical preaching. In this way the Word of God became food for the faithful attending the liturgy.

This lectionary became also inspirational for some Protestants. According to a Methodist theologian, James White, the lectionary published after the Second Vatican Council is “Catholicism’s greatest gift to Protestant preaching”.<sup>8</sup> That is why some Christian denominations adopted this lectionary, with some non-inherent modifications, for their official pastoral use. Episcopal and Presbyterian churches in the United States adopted the lectionary in 1970. The Lutheran Church in the United States adopted it in 1973. The Catholic lectionary was used by those Christian denominations until 1983. In that year a group of Christian denominations, using the foundation of the Catholic lectionary, prepared their own lectionary, which was modified in 1992 and published as the *Revised Common Lectionary*.<sup>9</sup> This revised lectionary was accepted, among others, by: Presbyterians, United Church of Christ, Disciples of Christ, United Methodists, and Lutheran churches in the United States.<sup>10</sup>

What was added in the *Revised Common Lectionary*, in comparison to the Catholic one, were additional, alternative readings of the Old Testament in the Ordinary Time. They were prepared according to the *lectio continua* method, i.e. the consecutive reading of the chosen parts of the Scriptures, similar to the continuous reading of the letters of the Apostles read on Sundays as the second reading. It means that in the Protestant lectionary the typological method was replaced by the method of continuous reading. As a consequence, in Year

<sup>7</sup> *Ordo Lectionum Missae*. Ed. typica altera. Città del Vaticano 1981. Por. N. B o n n e a u: *The Sunday Lectionary*. p. 28–29.

<sup>8</sup> J. W h i t e: *Christian Worship in Transition*. Nashville. TN 1976 p. 139.

<sup>9</sup> Nashville TN 1992. See: F. W e s t: *Scripture and Memory: The Ecumenical Hermeneutics of the Three-Year Lectionaries*. Collegeville MN 1997.

<sup>10</sup> See R.P. W a z n a k: *An Introduction to the Homily*. Collegeville MN 1998 p. 75. N. B o n n e a u: *The Sunday Lectionary* p. 52.

A readings from the Torah (the Pentateuch) are suggested. The reason for such a choice was compatibility with the Gospel according to Mathew, which is read in Year A and is, so to speak, the most “Jewish” Gospel, filled with many quotations, images and parallels from the Old Testament. Next, in Year B, the Gospel according to Mark is read, in which the predominant title of Jesus is “the Son of God,” so this had an impact on the choice of stories about David. And at the end, in Year C, the Gospel according to Luke is read, in which the care for social justice plays an important role. That is why it seemed proper for the authors of the *Revised Common Lectionary* to propose readings from the Prophets for this year. The revised lectionary became the canvas for many texts of homilies prepared from the same biblical text by the ministers of different Christian denominations.

As the initial publishing of the Post-Vatican Catholic lectionary attracted attention of Protestants, similarly the revised Protestant lectionary attracted some Catholic theologians. As a consequence, voices have been raised in favor of this lectionary being used also by Catholics.<sup>11</sup> Until now, however, they remain unheard in the Vatican.

The lectionary is decisive for liturgical preaching. It does not provide preachers with illustrational material for the topics that they choose. No, the sequence is totally different. It is the biblical text from lectionary that is the source for the topic of preaching. Biblical and liturgical texts shed light on the life of participants of the liturgy. And it is the role of the preacher to interpret important aspects of human life in light of the biblical and liturgical texts and signs, and to lead the faithful into the mystery celebrated in the liturgy.

The texts of the lectionary comprise the integral entity and are well-matched with the liturgical year. Both the lectionary and the liturgical year, together with other liturgical signs, give expression to the Mystery of Christ which is present and active among participants in the liturgy. And exactly this Mystery of Jesus Christ is the center and the main subject of preaching. It is developed and unveiled along the timeline of the liturgical year.

The Lectionary, as important as it is, might be of even greater importance if it became common for more Catholics and Protestants. It would be the common source for multiple homiletics texts – for instance, commentaries and inspirational text for preachers. They might use ecumenical resources for the preparation of their own homilies. It is always very enriching when Christians from different denominations share their experiences of Jesus Christ and undertake efforts to preach the abundance of the Lord’s wisdom and beauty. The ecumenical aids published together by Christians of different denominational backgrounds

<sup>11</sup> See R.P. W a z n a k: *An Introduction to the Homily* p. 75.

would be, in itself, a powerful sign of the striving for unity. It could challenge ministers to do their best when preparing for their preaching.

As is typical in the ecumenical movement, common aids for preaching concentrate on the central truths of faith. This is in accord with the rule of the hierarchy of the truth. According to that rule, the central truths of faith are to be preached as central, this means more often and with a clear emphasis. The peripheral truths should be preached as such: less often and without creating an impression that they are central. For instance, the central place in the Christian profession of faith belongs to the statement of one God in three Persons and the truth of the redemption of humankind by Jesus Christ. The peripheral, on the other hand are, for instance, private apparitions or different pious practices, such as the Rosary or the Divine Mercy Chaplet. In preaching they should not be presented as something almost necessary for salvation.

It has to be added that the rule of the hierarchy of truth does not prevent preaching the whole deposit of faith, which was given by Jesus to the Apostles. This deposit of faith has to be forwarded unchanged in its substance through the ages to always new generations of disciples of Christ.

#### **IV. The challenge of contemporary liturgical rules**

Common ecumenical aids for preaching might be achieved without great difficulties. But consensus on the common lectionary has to be reached first. Besides this, the praxis of ecumenical preaching leaves a lot to be desired.

There are differences between Churches and ecclesial communities in understanding the ministries in the Church and the liturgy. That is why there is also a difference as far as who may be a preacher.

##### **1. Who may be a preacher**

The Pontifical Council for Unity of Christians suggests that Catholics participate in prayers, hymns and gestures of Christian Churches and the ecclesial communities who invite them to do so. On the proposal of the host, they may read the given text or even deliver the homily.<sup>12</sup> This praxis, however, is not reciprocal. During the celebration of the Holy Mass by Catholics, even the readings are reserved to Catholics. Only on special occasions and for a just reason may a diocesan bishop allow members of other Churches or ecclesial communities to take on the function of a lector.<sup>13</sup> Even more strict are the rules concern-

<sup>12</sup> The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity: *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism*, 118.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. 133.



ing the homily. According to Catholic theology, the homily is part of the liturgy itself and is reserved to bishops, priests and deacons. This is because it is the presentation of the mysteries of faith and moral norms of Christian living according to the Catholic Tradition.<sup>14</sup>

Those rules, however, are not respected in each diocese in Poland. There is a long tradition – developed after the Second Vatican Council – of mutual prayers and preaching in an “Ecumenical Week”, which takes place from January 18 to 25 each year. In this time, not only do Catholic priests preach in Protestant churches, but some Protestant ministers are invited to preach during the Holy Mass, even when it is celebrated by Catholic bishops. This practice is very unusual, considering that even Catholic seminary students finishing theology are not allowed to preach on such occasions, unless they are ordained. The mentioned practice is not allowed by the Church’s Canonical Law and yet it sometimes occurs.<sup>15</sup>

There are no such restrictions about preaching out of the context of the liturgy. And there is a practice of inviting the ministers of other Churches or ecclesial communities to preach to the audience belonging to a denomination different from that of the preacher.

## **2. AOS experience**

As a member of the Apostleship of the Sea of the United States of America (AOS), I received a “Guest Staff Program: Priest General Information.” It describes, among other things, the duties of the Catholic priest on Board: religious responsibilities and general requirements. One point says: “When a Protestant Minister is not present: we will ask our guests for a volunteer to officiate. If no one comes forward, we kindly ask that you officiate the Interdenominational Service normally held on Sundays at 4:00 p.m. on port days (or 9:00 a.m. on Sea Days).” On one of the cruises, I asked the Protestants gathered on Sunday morning, who was ready to preside. No one volunteered, so I decided to do this myself. All of a sudden two people approached me: a man from Australia and a woman from elsewhere. Because the man was one step faster I suggested to him the biblical text from the lectionary. He rejected my suggestion, saying he did not need it. “What?!, the woman asked, “You don’t need the Bible? How then do you want to preside, in which order?” He answered, “Without books, spontaneously.” Hearing such an answer, the woman asked me to preside. Which I did. I proposed the structure of the liturgy of the word. After the Gospel I said

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. 134. See: *Canon Law of the Catholic Church* can. 767; *The Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches* can. 671, § 40.

<sup>15</sup> *Canon Law of the Catholic Church* can. 776, §1. See: Second Vatican Council *Sacro-sanctum Concilium* (4.12.1963) 52; John Paul II: *Catechesi tradendae* (16.10.1979) 48.



the homily, and asked the man from Australia to share his thoughts with the congregation. We finished the Sunday assembly by saying the Lord's Prayer. This experience showed me how divided Protestants are among themselves. There are some communities that have their rules for worship and there are some others that do not care for any rules and put emphasis on spontaneity.

On another cruise, I celebrated the Holy Mass for Catholics on Sunday at 8 a.m. Right afterwards in the same place there was an "Interdenominational Service led by the Congregation". At the same time, but in a neighboring room, there was a Sunday prayer meeting of Methodists who used a prayer book. I participated in the interdenominational service. At the beginning, one man announced the order, which was then followed. We began with an opening hymn, then a woman gave approximately a five minutes' talk about the immensity of the universe and observed that God knows everything and everyone very well. "All is numbered", she quoted from the Bible. After her a man told stories for nearly half an hour about journeys to the islands, which are small, insignificant in the world, but cared for by the Lord, who pays attention to even the smallest things. The preacher made an allusion to the meeting of Jesus with Zacchaeus. His longest story was about a childhood faith experience, after which another man said a short, fifteen-second prayer. This was the end of the Sunday assembly. I was surprised that nothing from the Bible was read. There was no moment of silence to ponder the Word of God. And the history of the Church has proven that negligence of the Bible devaluates preaching and indicates a crisis in the Church.

### **3. Academy of Homiletics and Societas Homiletica**

There are fields of good cooperation between preachers and teachers of preaching representing different Christian denominations. I mean especially *the Academy of Homiletics* and *Societas Homiletica*, i.e. Society of Homiletics. The first organization brings together teachers of homiletics from different Christian communities in the United States of America and meets once a year in one of the American cities. The other organization is international and has a meeting every second year in different countries in the world, for example in the United States, in Europe, in Asia and Africa. Teachers responsible for the formation of preachers share their biblical, theological, and existential experiences, observations, and reflections. There is always time to listen to some preachers, and interesting lectures.

## **V. The centrality of preaching Jesus Christ**

Reflection upon preaching and ecumenism reminds all Christians that the central message to be preached is Jesus Christ. Of course this message should be down to earth, existential. It should address the real concerns and joys of the au-

dience. The preaching, however, cannot be deformed to become anthropocentric without being at the same time Christocentric. Anthropocentrism without Christocentrism becomes secular storytelling, which does not lead to nourishment of the faith or to the lifting of the hearts to the Lord.

But even when ministers of different Christian denominations preach Jesus Christ as the only Son of God the Father and Savior of the world and invite their listeners to choose and accept Him as one's own Savior, it is not sufficient. Christ has to be preached as total – as the Head and Body, and the mystical body of Christ is the Church.

“Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many” (1 Cor 12,12–14; see: Rom 12,3–8; Ef 4,7–16).

There is, however, a difference between Catholics and a number of Protestant communities in what they believe the Church is. Many Protestants focus exclusively on each person's relationship with Christ. They believe their church is just a “man-made institution,” existing to preach the Gospel and lead others to Christ. It is not, in their opinion, the Body of Christ – Christ's continued presence on earth. It has no divine dimension. This spirituality leads to divisions among members because no authority exists to verify anyone's beliefs or actions.<sup>16</sup> Hence all the divisions in their ranks. People believe they are only living in a man-made institution in order to create – or to go to – another one that's closer to their beliefs. They want to be in an institution that is “Spirit filled”, but that does not make it the Body of Christ, in their opinion.

## **VI. Problem of the divided Christian communities and the language of preaching**

We can preach Christ, but all preaching, if it wants to be fruitful, should necessarily be accompanied by the invitation to join the Christian community and lead to such. Preaching Christ is not fulfilled unless it is accompanied with the call to community of His mystical Body. But here there is a problem with ecumenical preaching. To which Christian community can we invite those to whom we proclaim the one and the same Gospel of Jesus Christ? Should or can a Catholic preacher invite his listeners to join a Protestant community? Or, in reverse,

<sup>16</sup> See: L. Thomas, J. Alkire: *Healing as a Parish Ministry: Mending Body, Mind and Spirit*. Seattle WA 2000 pp. 22–23. 32–33.

would a Protestant preacher invite listeners to join a Catholic community? It might not be so easy. It also depends on the local context in which listeners live. However this issue is handled, it is important that presentations of one another's beliefs are free of anti-denominational prejudices. We must take a positive approach to each other, even when we speak honestly of our differences.

On February 6, 2017, in the year of the commemoration of the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the famous publication of the thesis of Martin Luther and of the Protestant Reformation, Pope Francis met with the leaders of the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany, which is a body representing Lutherans, Reformed and United communities. Cardinal Reinhard Marx, archbishop of Munich and president of the German Catholic Bishops' Conference accompanied the group to the papal meeting. He told reporters afterwards that in the very difficult times in which we live, Christians have to find a common way of responding and witnessing to the Gospel, asking themselves whether they should use "a language of division, of dominance, of hate, of confrontation, or should it be a language of dialogue, of understanding, of goodwill?"<sup>17</sup>.

## VII. Conclusion

The Kingdom of God, which was inaugurated by Jesus Christ through His wondrous life, deeds and proclamation, and in a very special way through His paschal mystery of death, resurrection and return to the Father's glory – this Kingdom is the ultimate destiny of all people of all time. God wanted the Church not for herself, but in order that she serve God's plan to save everyone. The Church is at the service of the people of God.

The Church lives in the world and is for it a source of blessing and at the same time a positive cause of lasting uneasiness, commotion. The Church does not let the world be at peace, totally satisfied with itself. She points out the impermanence of all terrestrial, finite things. She encourages all people to look at reality with the perspective of the eternal life to which everyone is called.<sup>18</sup> The voice of the Church will be more clearly heard and more fruitful when different Christian communities, without losing their own identity, will preach Jesus Christ as He is present in His Word and in His Church.

<sup>17</sup> C. Wooden: *Keep searching for unity. Pope tells German Lutherans and Catholics*. "Catholic Herald" (6.02.2017) <http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2017/02/06/keep-searching-for-unity-pope-tells-german-lutherans-and-catholics/> (last entrance: 10.02.2017).

<sup>18</sup> See. Z.J. Kijas: *Inna strona Kościoła*. Pelplin 2011 s. 97.

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## STRESZCZENIE

### Ekumenizm i przepowiadanie Słowa Bożego

Celem niniejszego artykułu jest ukazanie obiecujących badań w homiletyce oraz w praktyce przepowiadania, gdzie możliwa jest współpraca między wyznawcami Chrystusa należącymi do różnych wyznań. Obejmuje to pola prawdziwej współpracy między głosicielami słowa należącymi do różnych wspólnot kościelnych, ale także przypomnienie, że ekumeniczne nauczanie i prawdziwa duszpasterska opieka nie mogą opierać się na rezygnacji z własnej tożsamości konfesjonalnej lub zaprzeczaniu jej. Tym, co wspólne dla chrześcijańskich wyznań, są męczennicy – świadkowie Dobrej Nowiny Jezusa Chrystusa. Innym wspólnym dziedzictwem wszystkich wyznań chrześcijańskich jest Biblia jako źródło przepowiadania i nauczania. Niektóre z denominacji chrześcijańskich korzystają ze wspólnego lub analogicznego lekcjonarza z czytaniem liturgicznymi. Głoszony jest jednak Jezus Chrystus jako Pan, a nie Biblia. Oprócz chrystocentrycznej treści ważny jest język przepowiadania, który powinien być językiem dialogu, dobrej woli, a nie dystansu, dominacji, nienawiści lub konfrontacji.

**Słowa kluczowe:** ekumenizm, przepowiadanie, Biblia, lekcjonarz

## SUMMARY

### **Ecumenism and Preaching the Word of God**

The purpose of this paper is to present the promising fields in homiletics and in pastoral praxis of preaching where interdenominational cooperation is possible. This includes the fields of real collaboration among preachers of different ecclesial communities, but also the reminder that ecumenical preaching and true pastoral care cannot be based on resignation or declining of one's own confessional identity.

What is common for Christian denominations are the martyrs – the witnesses of the Good News of Jesus Christ. Another common heritage of all Christian denominations is the Bible as a Source of Preaching. Some of the denominations share the lectionary as a gift and challenge. But it is not the Bible, which is being preached but Jesus Christ as the Lord. Besides Christocentrism in preaching, the language of preaching is important, which should be a language of dialogue and goodwill, not one of division, dominance, hate, or confrontation.

**Keywords:** ecumenism, preaching, Bible, lectionary